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## Molokai Ranch plans to start growing coffee

Molokai Ranch Ltd. and Hawaii Guarani Plantations Inc. plan to plant coffee on Molokai beginning this year, the companies announced yesterday.

The companies expect to cultivate 800 acres of Molokai Ranch land in the Naiwa area initially, according to John Hays, Hawaii Guarani Planta-

tions president.

Hays said the firms will employ 25 to 30 people at first, but will require 50 people for every 2,000 acres planted.

Plans call for the another 1,200 acres to be planted next year and 1,300 more in 1988, he said. The initial harvest is scheduled in 1989.

Hays said a new hybrid variety of Arabica coffee called catuai will be planted.

The hybrid produces a compact tree that allows mechanized cultivation and harvesting. It grows at elevations from sea level to 3,500 feet and is more resistant to pests and disease, needs less rainfall, and tolerates higher wind conditions than other types of coffee, according to the two companies.

According to the announcement, the potential acreage for catuai and similar hybrids is about 20,000 acres on Molokai and 250,000 acres statewide.